rationalisation of officers and other staff strength at various offices of Coal India Limited. The target are fixed every year for these companies. The target fixed during last four years are given as under:—

Year	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
VRS Target	4800	7600	6600	8000	11500
Amount Sanctioned (Rs. in Crores)	80	160	165	180	250 (Provisioned)
Amount Utilised (Rs. in Crores)	75.33	151.03	158.51	140.02	
Persons Retired	4312	8063	7703	6206	

Two tier freight classification for transportation of coal by Railways

1837. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Coal Ministry is pressing for a two tier freight classification for transportation of coal by Railways to make, domestic coal competitive;

(b) if so, whether the Coal Ministry has already asked the Ministry of Railways to look into the proposal which calls for a reduction of freight rates of coal transported to destinations beyond 450 kilometers;

(c) if so, to what extent the Railway Ministry has considered the request of Coal Ministry; and

(d) by what time a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) and (b) Ministry of Coal has not asked Ministry of Railways for two-tier freight classification for transportation of coal. However, Ministry of Coal have addressed Ministry of Railways on several occasions to

rationalise railway freight structure for making domestic coal competitive at long haul distances from pit head. No positive response has yet been received from Ministry of Railways.

(c) and (d) Ministry of Railways have intimated that the freight structure on coal is telescopic in nature under which rate per kilometre decreases in distance. Ministry of Railways do not have any proposal for introduction of two-tier freight classification for transportation of coal.

Proposal to Solve Kashmir Problems

1838. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to resolve Kashmir problems;

(b) if so, the fresh efforts made in that regard; and

(c) the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) It is the Government's endeavour to bring back peace and normalcy in the State of J&K. Accordingly, the three prongs of our strategy being implemented jointly with the State Govt. are (i) proactively tackling cross border terrorism with the help of the security forces whose tactics and deployment are kept dynamic to meet the changing ground realities, (ii) taking steps to facilitate accelerated economic development, and (iii) willingness to talk with all such people or groups of J& K who eschew the path of violence with a view redressing the genuine grievances of the people of J&K.

(b) and (c) Recent refinements in the strategy include *inter-alia* (i) removing the restraint of non initiation of combat operations against the terrorists in J&K, which had been placed earlier on the security forces, who shall now taken such action against the terrorists as they judge best while, in the process, continuing to exercise maximum possible are that no undue harassment is caused to the civilian population of J&K, (ii) reiterating the